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Project Number 5278

**Mr. James X. Shafer
Remedial Project Manager
Northern Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command
10 Industrial Highway, Mail Stop 82
Lester, Pennsylvania 19113**

**Reference: CLEAN Contract No. N62472-90-D-1298
Contract Task Order 218**

Subject: RAB Meeting Summary

Dear Mr. Shafer:

Enclosed is a copy of the summary of the December 9, 1998 RAB meeting. If you have any questions about this matter, please contact me at 978-658-7899.

Very truly yours,

**Betsy Horne
Community Relations Specialist**

BH:b

Enclosure

**c: J. Wyman/D. Sanders, NETC (w/enc.)
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File 5278 - 3.2 (w/o enc.)/5278 - 9.4 (w/enc.)**

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RAB DISCUSSES PUBLIC CONCERNS ABOUT KATY FIELD

On Wednesday, December 9, 1998, the NETC Newport Installation Restoration Program Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) met at the NETC Officers' Club.

The discussion focused on recent public concern about possible health risks to children who had played at Katy Field (the Old Fire Fighters Training Area on Coaster's Harbor Island). That day, EPA representatives spent the first of a 2-day event scheduled by EPA at Middletown Town Hall talking with families who had been exposed to possible contamination at Katy Field. EPA created a document of 16 questions to use in interviewing people; although their staffs were present during these interviews, the Navy stated that they and ATSDR did not feel the questions' tone was appropriate.

EPA had sent letters to families affiliated with the Middletown Little League (which had used Katy Field the previous summer) plus 15 others who had attended a November public meeting about Katy Field called by Congressman Kennedy. The letters asked them to stop by the town hall on the appointed days to complete the questionnaire about how their children had used Katy Field. Nine people stopped by on the first day; most were very cooperative. EPA will compile the information from the questionnaires to help update the 1994 risk assessment.

Highlights of the RAB meeting:

The day care center originally located at Katy Field closed in 1994 and the facility was moved to another on-base location, a decision that had been in the pipeline long before the state collected samples in 1991-1992. Once elevated results were evident, the Navy capped the site with 6 inches of top soil pending completion of the new facility.

Parents reported that some children had had routine blood lead testing related to school requirements (and not associated with the concern about Katy Field). Although the Navy hospital had offered free blood lead testing, it had received 27 calls but had performed only one test. People may be taking their children to their own doctors for testing. The Navy has issued two fact sheets (one for physicians) about Katy Field.

The lead testing procedure is to take a baseline, then test again in 3 months. Because lead flushes out of the system within that time, if a child continues to exhibit a high lead level after 90 days, the exposure would not be from Katy Field but from another source in that child's environment.

The Navy's position on Katy Field was that previous studies showed no unacceptable risk. EPA's position was that the 1994 human health risk assessment used data that showed that some areas were above screening levels and it underestimated risk because the number of days used to determine exposure was too low and several pathways (inhalation, dermal, and sediment) were not assessed. In addition, some areas of the site were not sampled and access to them has not been restricted. Further, more data are needed in the areas where children play. Since the 1994 risk assessment was issued, EPA has published new criteria and RIDEM has issued state regulations.

The Navy collected thirty-six new samples in November. Another public meeting will be scheduled when the results have been analyzed. The site is fenced and the Navy has been actively working on remedial actions. After the risk assessment is revised, the Navy will prepare a feasibility study to assess potential remedial options. The results of a subsurface investigation the Navy conducted in 1997 to determine if the piping from the fire fighting system remained below the site (no source area was found) will also be included in the upcoming reports.

Several RAB members expressed concern that the agencies were not working cooperatively and that some parents had become concerned unnecessarily. Regardless of what the new data show, the Navy has pledged to do the right thing.